

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-10

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 SSO-00 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /016 R

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DRAFTED BY: P:ALRAPHEL

APPROVED BY: P-ALRAPHEL

S/S:WHLUERS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL ASWAN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 055952

TOSEC-397

FOLLOWING REPEAT KHARTOUM 602 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
ADDIS ABABA ASMARA GENEVA ROME DTD 11 MAR

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 0602

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SWEL, ET, SU, US

SUBJECT: RELIEF OPERATIONS IN ERITREA

REF: STATE 049035 AND 051456

BEGIN SUMMARY: GOS HAS RECENTLY APPROACHED ETHIOPIAN
CHARGE HERE RE ICRC ACCESS IN ADDIS AND ACCORDINGLY
RELUCTANT BECOME INVOLVED IN PROPOSED MULTILATERAL
EFFORT (FIRST REFTEL). END SUMMARY.

1. SAW FONMIN USEC MIRGHANI MARCH 11 AT MY
REQUEST TO REVIEW STATUS ICRC INTEREST IN ERITREAN RELIEF
OPERATIONS. DRAWING ON REFTELS, I TOLD MIRGHANI WE
CONTINUED TAKE SERIOUSLY OUR RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER GENEVA
CONVENTION AND WERE PLANNING DISCUSS WITH FRIENDLY
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EMBASSIES IN ADDIS POSSIBILITY SOME SORT COORDINATED

APPROACH TO PMAC RE ICRC ISSUE. WE CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE ACTIONS BY PMAC UNDER GENEVA CONVENTION COULD HAVE FAVORABLE IMPACT ON PMAC'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE ABROAD. DEPARTMENT HAD ASKED ME REVIEW THIS SITUATION WITH MIRGHANI. ON PERSONAL BASIS, I WONDERED WHETHER SUDANESE EMBASSY MIGHT USEFULLY BE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS EFFORT.

2. MIRGHANI BEGAN BY APOLOGIZING FOR DELAY IN RECEIVING ME. MINSTATE AHMED HAD BEEN ILL AND, IN VIEW VACANCY IN FOREIGN MINISTER'S POST, HE HAD BEEN INORDINATELY BUSY. ON ICRC ISSUE, GOS HAD BEEN APPROACHED APPROXIMATELY WEEK AGO BY ICRC THROUGH SUDANESE MISSION GENEVA. ICRC HAD SAID ITS REPRESENTATIVE IN ADDIS WAS NOT BEING GIVEN ACCESS TO SENIOR ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS AND HAD ASKED WHETHER GOS COULD FACILITATE ICRC CONTACTS. MIRGHANI HAD ACCORDINGLY CALLED IN ETHIOPIAN CHARGE AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT ICRC REP WOULD BE RECEIVED NORMALLY IN ADDIS. SO FAR, THERE HAD BEEN NO RESPONSE FROM PMAC. MIRGHANI ALSO SAID NO ICRC SUPPLIES YET MOVING THROUGH SUDAN, SINCE PMAC APPROVAL NOT YET FORTHCOMING (PARA 2 KHARTOUM 0400).

3. VIEW FOREGOING, MIRGHANI DOUBTED SUDANESE EMBASSY COULD PLAY USEFUL ROLE IN PROPOSED INITIATIVE. HE THOUGHT NUMBER OF EMBASSIES SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO PMAC IMPORTANCE NOT ALIENATING WORLD PUBLIC OPINION ON SUCH HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AS ICRC BUT "GOS AND USG ARE PROBABLY THE TWO WORST PLACED TO BE EFFECTIVE." I REITERATED THAT USG HAD CLEAR RESPONSIBILITY UNDER GENEVA CONVENTION AND WE WERE CONSEQUENTLY SEEING HOW BEST IT MIGHT BE DISCHARGED.

4. COMMENT: MIRGHANI'S REMARKS ARE FIRST NEWS WE HAVE HAD OF NEW, RECENT ICRC APPROACH TO GOS. HIS COMMENTS MAKE CLEAR THAT SUDAN WISHES MOVE WITH CAUTION ON THIS ISSUE AT THIS STAGE. WE SURMISE THIS ATTITUDE REFLECTS GOS PRIORITY INTEREST IN SOME MOVEMENT ON NIMEIRI'S MEDIATION INITIATIVE (KHARTOUM 0600 - NOTAL).
BREWER UNQTE INGERSOLL

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